REMARKS

Claims 1 to 20 are pending.
Claims 18 to 20 are withdrawn from consideration
Claims 1 to 17 are rejected.

In the Office Action dated March 22, 2000, claims 1 to 5 and 7 to 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Shimada et al. in view of Zensuke. Claims 6, 8 and 12 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The cancellation of claims 2 and 12 and the amendments above to claims 1, 6, 8 and 11 are believed to overcome the '112 rejections. The amendments above to claims 1, 6, 8 and 11 are also believed to render moot the '103 rejection.

Amended claim 1 recites a support including a mixture of manganese dioxide and copper oxide; and an alkali material combined with the support. The support and the alkali material are combined for NOx removal. The support includes at least sixty weight percent manganese dioxide and at least about ten weight percent copper oxide. Such weight percentages are useful for removing NOx.

Shimada et al. disclose a support for removing gases that are believed to be byproducts of semiconductor manufacturing processes. The support includes a mixture of manganese dioxide and copper oxide. However, the weight percentages of the copper oxide and manganese oxide are different than those recited in amended claim 1. Shimada et al. disclose a support including about 44 wt% to 83.3 wt% copper oxide (ratios of 1:0.8 to 1:5 as disclosed on page 3, line 23), whereas amended claim 1 recites a weight percentage no greater than 40 wt%.

Thus, Shimada et al. do not teach or suggest the use of copper oxide and

manganese dioxide for NOx removal, nor do they teach or suggest the weight percentages recited in amended claim 1. Zensuke does not either. Therefore, the '103 rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn, and amended claim 1 and its dependent claims 3 to 11 should be allowable over the combination of Shimada et al. and Zensuke.

Amended claim 11 recites an adsorbent for removing NOx from a gas. The adsorbent comprises support particles made of a mixture including manganese dioxide and copper oxide; and an alkali material. There is at least sixty weight percent manganese dioxide and at least about ten weight percent copper oxide. For the reasons above, the '103 rejection of amended claim 11 should be withdrawn and claim 11 and its dependent claims 13 to 17 should be allowed.

The undersigned respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the restriction requirement and examine method claims 18 to 20. Claim 18 recites a method of removing NOx from a gas. The method includes the steps of exposing a gas to a mixture of copper oxide and manganese oxide and also exposing the gas to an alkali material.

According to MPEP §803 "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner *must* examine it on the merits, *even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions* (emphasis added)."

The undersigned does not know whether a search of class 95, subclass 129, was performed during the examination of claims 1 to 17 (the search of claims 1 to 17 appears to have covered the method claims as well). If it has been searched, then examiner would not be seriously burdened by examining the method claims.

The documents made of record do not teach or suggest the use of copper oxide and manganese dioxide for NOx removal. Therefore, claim 18 to 20 should be allowable over the documents made of record.

The specification has been amended. No new subject matter has been added.

The undersigned respectfully requests an acknowledgement of a claim for domestic priority under 35 USC §119(e). An acknowledgement was not indicated on Form PTO-326.

It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are earnestly solicited

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner For Patents, Washington, DC 20231, or facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on: June 14, 2000.

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